

A. CWS/Probation Cover Sheet


California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan-Update

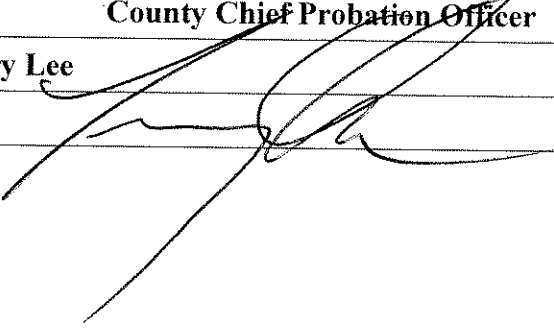
County:	Trinity
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Trinity County Health and Human Services/ Child Protective Services
Period of Plan:	June 11, 2010-June10, 2013
Period of Outcomes Data:	Quarter ending: July 2011 Data Report; Data Extract: Q4; 2010
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Submitted by each agency for the children under its care

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A. The SIP Narrative

- i. Process for Conducting the Trinity County System Improvement Plan
 - a. The SIP Planning Process and Team Membership

The Trinity County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) conducted a System Improvement Plan (SIP) meeting for planning purposes at the onset of the SIP process. A diverse group of agency personnel and community members were invited to attend the meeting to provide input into the upcoming three year plan. The mandatory core team representatives attended the meeting on April 21, 2010 at the Probation Department conference room in Weaverville. Those also in attendance were representatives of CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF for funding planning for the integrated three year SIP.

Many of the SIP team representatives comprise what is known as the Mid-level Management Team (MLMT). The representatives are managers from CPS, Probation, Human Response Network CBO (HRN), Behavioral Health Services (BHS), Trinity County Office of Education, and Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AODS). The MLMT meets at least monthly at the Probation Department conference room to identify and coordinate services for children and their families. The cases are generally children with higher level service and/or placement needs. All team members share in the critical decisions made in this multi-disciplinary forum.

SIP Team Core Representatives include:

- CPS/HHS
- Probation
- Trinity County Office of Education
- Trinity County Office of Education SELPA
- Human Response Network Community Based Organization
- First Five
- Behavioral Health Services
- California Department of Social Services
- Foster Parent
- Parent/Consumer
- CAPC
- County Board of Supervisor designated agency to administer CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF Programs
- Children's Trust Fund
- Northern Region Training Academy
- Tribal TANF (representing all Trinity County Tribes)

The SIP team reviewed information that was gathered from the Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR), the first process in the continuous quality improvement cycle, in June 2009. There has been a shift from compliance to a continuous quality improvement system. Information from the recent County Self Assessment (CSA), the second process in the continuous quality improvement cycle, in March 2010 was also included in the SIP planning.

b. Data Sources

Data was acquired from the CWS Outcomes System Summary Reports published by UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research (CSSR) and Safe Measures during the PQCR and CSA process. The January 2010 CWS Outcomes System Summary (Q2 2009) data was provided to the team members to assist in the decision making necessary for the SIP planning process. The team reviewed both quantitative and qualitative information from the PQCR and CSA.

UPDATE

The CDSS January 2010 quarterly data report, data extract: Q2 2009 and July 2011 quarterly data report, data extract: Q4 2010, URL: <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG1358.htm>.

Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Glasser, T., Williams, D., Simmerman, K., Simon, V., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Frerer, K., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Winn, A., Lou, C., & Peng, C. (2009). *Child Welfare Service Reports for California* for Trinity County. Retrieved from University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website. URL: http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare

Children's Research Center Safe Measures Data, Trinity County CWS/CMS Reports Retrieved from Children's Research Center website. URL: www.safemeasures.org/ca

c. Decision Making

Decision making was a collaborative process with the SIP team members. The majority of those same team members were also part of the PQCR and CSA process in TC. Priorities for the SIP were determined by the team. Due to the small size and rural nature of the county, team members represent multiple roles and functions within the county. The CPS supervisor and staff analyst took the lead roles in the planning and drafting of the SIP. The Tribal TANF Coordinator represented the three Tribes Federally recognized in Trinity County for the PQCR and the CSA. The Tribal TANF Coordinator will continue to represent the Trinity County Tribes throughout the three year SIP process. Discussion occurred at multiple levels and at different intervals with team members in consultation with California Department of Social Services staff representing the Outcomes and Accountability branch as well as the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP).

Child welfare outcome data, available local services, and current performance of CPS and Probation were all considered in determining the plan for the next three years.

ii. Outcomes Identified for Improvement

- a. The outcomes and accountability system has established core child welfare outcomes that are foundational to promoting best practice and providing for the needs of children in California. The California Child and Family Services

Review (C-CFSR) data indicators are specific to the safety, permanency and well-being of children in the child welfare system. The County Data Profile consists of outcomes that are measured by specific indicators.

The **Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR)** conducted in June 2009 revealed areas where improvement was indicated related to Measure C 1.1, 2, and 3 related to reunification and the length of time in placement. The focus area was the same for both CPS and Probation. It was noted that prior to twelve months of a child entering foster care, CWS indicated that the practice was to house youth and provide parents with services, but the goal of reunification and returning the child home was not being adequately addressed. Policies and practices were part of the review and included in the findings.

Focus Area for both CPS and Probation: Of all children discharged from foster care to reunification during the year who had been in foster care for 8 days or longer, (1) what percent were reunified in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from the home? (**Measure C1.1**), (2) what was the median length of stay (in months) from the date of latest removal from home until the date of discharge to reunification? (**Measure C1.2**) and, (3) what percent were discharged from foster care to reunification in less than 12 months from the date of latest removal from home? (**Measure C1.3**)

The PQCR case reviews, informant interviews and focus groups identified many areas of *strengths and promising practices* for both CPS and Probation, such as:

- Children/youth held an active role in discussing their placement options and preferences.
- Efforts were made to establish communication with family members
- Efforts were made to search for suitable family members of the child/youth
- Placements were made with siblings when possible or within close proximity
- Child/youth training and support was provided early on in a case when services were available
- Supportive work environments and good cross-agency collaboration

The PQCR case reviews, informant interviews and focus groups identified areas of *challenge* for both CPS and Probation, such as:

- Lack of local in-county services, resulting in delayed or no services
- Out-of-county placements
- History of unsuccessful reunification/lack of staff training
- Foster parent training needs
- Placement disruptions affecting educational stability
- Difficulty in engaging biological parents, particularly with AOD issues
- Maintaining consistent visitation with incarcerated parents
- Consistent implementation of Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings or Placement Review Team (PRT) meetings
- Collaboration challenges between CPS and Court
- Probation families are at times uncooperative with the Probation system and do not participate in the development of the case plan
- Probation families do not always understand the juvenile court process and Probation system
- Delays in implementing concurrent planning

- The need for transitional living programs and more ILP services, including after care services once the youth is returned to the community
- b. The **County Self-Assessment (CSA)** was completed in March 2010. The child welfare areas needing improvement were, as follows:

S1.1 No recurrence of maltreatment-federal standard>94.6%

Of all children who were victims of a substantiated maltreatment allegation during the first six months of the year, what percent were not victims of another substantiated allegation with the next 6-month period?

In Q2 2009 the county's no recurrence rate was 77.8% or 28 out of 36 children were not victims of another substantiated allegation. The county performance fell below the federal standard of 94.6% for the same time period. This measure has been identified for the SIP.

Update: *In Q4 2010, the county's no recurrence rate was 100%, i.e. 38 out of 38 children were not victims of another substantiated allegation. The county performance exceeded the federal standard of 94.6% for the same time period. We attribute this rate to the continued improvements in differential response and prevention and education programs being offered by the Department to families.*

Update: S2.1 No Maltreatment in Foster Care Federal Standard>99.68%

County remains at 100.0% in Q4 2010, which is above the Federal Standard. This can be attributed to the counties careful screening and follow up of placement homes and hands on approach to partnering with foster families to ensure that children are safe and their needs are being met while in care.

Update: C1 REUNIFICATION COMPOSITE Federal Standard >122.6

In Q2 2009 the county rate was 150.0%; however, in Q4 2010, it declined to 108.1% due primarily to a decline in reunification and reentry of the exit cohort in C1.1, C1.2, and C1.4, which was partially offset by an impressive improvement in C1.3, reunification within 12 months in the entry cohort. These numbers are easily skewed with the delay in a single family being reunified.

Update: C1.1 Reunification Within 12 Months (Exit Cohort) Federal Standard >75.2

In Q2 2009 Trinity County reunified 9 out of 9 children for a performance of 100.0%. In Q4 2010, the County reunified 15 out of 23 children, representing a decline in performance to 65.2%. Though this data shows a decline in reunification, all 7 of the children who did not reunify within the 12 month window did reunify after the 12 month window. The success in these cases is that these youth have not come back into care and that they did return home.

Update: C1.2 Median Time to Reunification (Exit Cohort) Federal Standard <5.4

The median time to reunification in Trinity County in Q2 2009 was 4.5, below the federal standard of 5.4. In Q4 2010, Trinity County's performance declined significantly to 7.9. Upon further investigation, we noticed that there was a large sibling group in this quarter

that did not reunify due to extensive substance abuse by the mother, which was supported by the Tribal representative.

C1.3 Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort)-Federal Standard >48.4%

In Q2 2009 TC's performance was 40% vs. the federal standard of 48.4%. By ethnicity, TC met the standard for all ethnicities except Hispanic and Caucasian children, who reunified at 42.9% and 33.3% respectively. This measure was not selected for the SIP because the county performance for the Reunification Composite is 150% vs. the federal standard of 122.6%. The county's performance for Q3 2009 for this measure also showed a vast improvement to 50% vs. the county performance of 40% for Q2 2009.

Update: *In Q4 2010, the county's performance was 80.8% v. the federal standard of 48.4%. This represents an impressive improvement in county performance from 40% in Q2 2009 and 50% in Q3 2009. This increase in performance is due in part to the departments' commitment to permanency and its ongoing efforts to help every child find long term connections. Four of the six children went to adoption, one aged out into a transitional housing program and another is moving into a legal guardianship.*

Update: C2 ADOPTION COMPOSITE Federal Standard >106.4

Although Trinity County's performance in Q2 2009 at 116.3 was above the federal standard, the County has continued to make significant improvements with its performance in Q4 2010 at 148.8, putting it far above the federal standard. This performance is attributed to a partnership and coordinated efforts between Trinity County CPS and the State Adoptions office in Arcata. The partnership has enabled an above average rate of adoptions for TC youth.

C2.1 Adoption within 24 months (exit cohort)-Federal Standard>36.6%

Of all children discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption during the year, what percent were discharged in less than 24 months from the date of the latest removal from home?

In Q2 2009 TC fell below the federal standard with the county's performance of 14.3%. TC has been improving steadily with this measure over the last five year period with an average of 52.86%. This is not a measure that TC is choosing to select for the SIP because the average performance exceeds the state and federal requirements.

Update: *In keeping with the County's steady improvement in this measure, the County's performance in Q4 2010 jumped to 80% v. the federal standard of 36.6%. Again, this increase in performance can be attributed to the partnership between agencies in achieving timely and permanent options for TC youth.*

C2.4 Legally free within 6 months (17 months in care)-Federal Standard>10.9%

Of all children in foster care for 17 continuous months or longer and not legally free for adoption on the first day of the year, what percent became legally free with the next 6 months?

TC has not met the federal standard 8 out of 11 years due to the lack of adoptive homes available to children. The branch for California State Adoptions is located in Arcata, California. The distance to the Arcata Branch poses challenges to obtaining adoptive homes available to TC children. The county continues to make efforts to obtain permanency for all children waiting adoptive placements.

Update: *In spite of the challenges noted in the SIP, Trinity County's efforts have enabled it to exceed the federal standard in Q4 2010 with a performance of 14.3%. A partnership and joint staffing's, as well as increased coordination with state adoptions has helped to improve this outcome.*

Update: C2.5 Adoption within 12 months (Legally Free) Federal Standard>53.7%
In light of the challenges Trinity County faces in obtaining adoptive homes its performance in Q4 2010 at 75% is equally impressive. The County's performance is well above the federal standard of 53.7% and the State performance of 64.3%. Again, this performance can be attributed to the relationship that the Department has built with State Adoptions and the strong culture of consistently looking for concurrent placement from the child's first entry into foster care. Though the county uses many Foster Family Agency or Relative placements due to a lack of local licensed homes, the Department screens these homes to ensure that they are concurrent before making the initial placement.

Update: C3 LONG TERM CARE COMPOSITE Federal Standard>121.7%
Trinity County has made significant improvements in the overall composite from its performance of 114.3% in Q2 2009 to 146.0% in Q4 2010. The Department continues to use family finding tools and look for permanency throughout the life of a case. The Department strongly pursues any permanent connections and has achieved permanency for children who would have otherwise been in long term care without any outside connections. This included adoption and legal guardianships.

C3.2 Exits to permanency (legally free at exit)-Federal Standard>98%

Of all children discharged from foster care during the year that were legally free for adoption, what percent were discharged to a permanent home prior to turning 18?

The Q2 2009 performance for TC was 88.9%, below the federal standard of 98% and the state's 96.9%. The ten-year average for TC was 93.61%. Although this specific measure was not identified for the SIP, the measures selected in the section following will have a positive impact on this permanency outcome.

Update: *Trinity County's Q4 2010 performance at 100% exceeded the federal standard, the statewide rate, and the County's own ten-year average. Again, this is attributed to the Department's push to find permanency for every youth in care. Family Finding, continued permanency planning, etc. continue until each youth achieves permanency.*

C3.3 In care 3 years or longer (emancipated or age 18 in care)-Federal Standard<37.5%

Of all children in foster care during the year who were either discharged to emancipation or turned 18 while still in care, what percent had been in foster care for 3 years or longer?

TC has failed to meet the <37.5% standard in Q2 2009. TC's rate for the quarter was 50%, better than the statewide rate of 60.6%. Based on eleven year data, TC's average was 57.35% and only met this standard once in that time period. In addition, based on the ten year average, Native American children had the highest in-care for three years or longer rate with 50%, followed by Caucasian children with 49.3%. No other ethnicities were represented in the data...

This measure was selected for the SIP because of the agreed upon concerns by the SIP team members due to the importance of achieving permanency for all youth in the CPS and Probation systems. As a priority, the Tribal representative will be included in discussions regarding strategies to reduce the time in care for Native American children. Family Search and Engagement efforts will be one strategy implemented to impact this measure.

Update: *With Trinity County's performance in Q4 2010 of 0.0%, it exceeded the federal standard, the statewide rate, and its own eleven-year average. This can be attributed to the Departments permanency searches and the adoption of youth before the age of emancipation. Additionally, the family conditions can be re-examined and if the family situation has changed or the risk factors are no longer present, the department can explore reunification.*

C4.3 Placement stability-Federal Standard>41.8%

Of all children served in foster care during the year that were in foster care for at least 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings?

The county's performance was 36.8% in Q2 2009 and less than the federal standard. TC's performance has been trending downwards and this measure has been selected for the SIP.

Update: *Trinity County's performance in Q4 2010 was at 40.0%, a slight increase from its performance in Q2 2009. The push for better screening of foster homes and the ongoing supportive relationships between the Department and foster families has made an impact of placement stability, as well as working with families during crisis to help maintain placements and improve overall stability. For Measure 2C, there were two case plans that were not in effect, which caused the contacts to not be counted, skewing the data. For Measure 2B, the goal of 90% was not met by one case. The focus on timeliness has been addressed administratively and we anticipate better outcomes in the future.*

c. Outcomes Selected by SIP Team Members for 2010-2013 SIP:

The outcome selection was prioritized by SIP team members from the overarching themes of safety and permanency from the PQCR and the CSA, as well as in consideration of the C-CFSR findings and Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The outcome areas and associated measures that were not selected will continue to be monitored. TC will continue to be accountable to holding those areas where standards have been met as well as striving to improve measures that fall below the standards.

❖ **Selected SIP Outcome-Safety: Measure S1.1 No recurrence of maltreatment**

Rationale for Selection of S1.1: TC's data in the safety measures exceeded federal standards except in S1.1 Recurrence of Maltreatment. As reunification data improved in TC, recurrence of maltreatment data declined. The actual small numbers represented in TC may not be statistically significant, however, the enormity of the potential consequences to children warrant the inclusion of this safety outcome in the SIP.

Improvement Targets or Goals for S.1: Q2 2009 data was 77.8% 12.4% below the federal standard of 94.6% and 16.2% below the state rate. CPS is experiencing social worker vacancies and staff turnover, plus the decline in resources as a result of budget restrictions. The target was selected considering the staffing and fiscal environment. An increase of 4.2 over the three year SIP for a total of 82% is the goal. This goal will be reviewed at the Annual SIP Update and revised if indicated.

Update: As of Q4 2010, Trinity County was at 100.0%, far exceeding its goal of 82% as well as both the federal standard and the state rate. We attribute this to ongoing efforts to work with families and address risk and safety issues and provide prevention services and education that will reduce recurrence of maltreatment. This includes expanding DR, parenting and supportive services.

❖ **Selected SIP Outcome-Permanency (Long Term Care Composite): Measure C3.3 In care 3 years or longer (emancipated or age 18 in care)**

Rationale for Selection of C3.3: TC has only met the standard one time in eleven years. Permanency for children/youth is a paramount concern for both CPS and Probation. This cohort most impacted by this outcome tends to be older youth. The longer a child/youth is in care and the more times that a child moves it becomes less likely that the child will achieve permanency. By focusing on permanency, and not just placement stability, it is anticipated that there will be improvements in the other permanency outcomes.

Probation has not had the ability to track this outcome data, however, beginning October 1, 2010; they will begin entering their data in CWS/CMS so analysis will then be available.

Update: Probation employees completed CWS/CMS training in June 2011 and began entering all data for youth in placements as of July 1, 2011 into CWS/CMS. Currently, all visits, contacts and services are being entered, and they are at full implementation.

Improvement Targets or Goals for C3.3: The federal standard is <37.5%, the state performance is 60% and TC's Q2 2009 performance was 50%. TC's performance for Q3 2009 was also 50%. To state this more precisely, this data reflects a total of four children/youth in placement. Two of them have been in care three years or longer and two of them have been in care for less than three years. It is important to stress the significance of a small data set which represent the actual number of children/youth in a county this size. The standard may or may not be met by the variation of only one child in a small county. The target for improvement is 12.5% for the three year plan with a review of this target and the permanency strategies at the Annual SIP Update.

Update: As noted above, Trinity County's performance in Q4 2010 of 0.0% exceeded the federal standard and its own improvement target goals. Regardless of the size of the data set, a performance of 0.0% is impressive. Maintaining this rate will continue to present a challenge for Trinity County because of the extremely small number of children/youth in placement. However, from the perspective of a long-term average, it makes a significant difference when the County is able to achieve a rate of 0%, such as this, in a time period. Again, this can be attributed to the counties push to find permanency for all youth.

❖ **Selected SIP Outcome-Permanency: C4.3 Placement stability (Placement Stability Composite)**

Rationale for Selection of C4.3: TC did not meet the federal standard and was lower than the state's performance in Q2 2009, although the standard was met in the eleven year average. Hispanic children had the highest placement stability rate, followed by Caucasian children. No other ethnicities were represented in this data. Research reveals that the longer a child/youth is in care without a permanent plan, the more likely this child/youth will have multiple placement changes. TC is committed to developing strategies to address placement stability and permanency.

Improvement Targets or Goals for C4.3: TC with 36.8% in Q2 2009 has nearly met the federal standard of >41.8% and has exceeded the state performance of 33.4%. The TC Q3 2009 data of 40% edged closer to the standard. Although the county's performance is near meeting the standard, this measure embodies the permanency improvements desired by both CPS and Probation. The goal is to meet the standard of 41.8% in the three year plan with review of the improvement in the Annual SIP Update.

Update: Trinity County continued to maintain its improvement to 40% in Q4 2010. The total number of children in care for at least 24 months declined from 12 to 10 during this period with the number of Hispanic children declining from 3

to 1 while the number of Caucasian children remained at 9. With such a small number of children represented in this measurement, maintaining a 40% target is extremely close to the federal standard and the County's target goal since the addition or deletion of a single child can mean a shift of 10% either way. Additionally, new strategies that have been implemented are so recent that they have not yet been able to impact the data, but we anticipate that data will be affected within the next 18-24 months. This can be attributed to the support being offered to foster families to help with placement stability, as well as careful screening at the initial placement.

From January 1, 2010, to December 31, 2010, 12 out of 58 counties in California, including Trinity County, had 20 or less children each in care under this measure. This represents almost a fifth of all counties in California. For these counties, the average rate was 33.6%, which is slightly higher than the statewide average of 32.4% for the same time period. The total population in care for these 12 counties was only 134 children during this period. With such a small data set, a relatively small shift in the number of children can result in a significant shift percentagewise. As indicated above, Trinity County has a very small population in care so maintaining its current 40% rate during the remainder of the three year plan is a reasonable goal.

B. CWS/Probation Narrative

The PQCR and CSA findings were discussed as part of the SIP planning process. The Executive Summaries for them are attachments to this plan. Permanency outcomes for both CPS and Probation have been identified for the current SIP. Improvements will be made in the measures related to long term foster care and placement stability. In addition, CPS will strive for improvement in the outcome area of safety, more specifically in the area of recurrence of maltreatment: Measure S1.1. In the July 2011, extract of Q4 2010 data repost posted on the CDSS website (<http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG1358.htm>), Trinity County had improved in the outcome area of safety, Measure S1.1 at 100%, compared to the national standard of 94.6.

Trinity County has continued to monitor the data from the Center for Social Services Research, University of California at Berkeley, each quarter, including the Composite Planner feature of the website. The data is used to inform our practice and determine if we are reaching our milestones for the three year plan. The county's performance relative to the national standard and the State PIP baseline were considered in the review of this data. TC met or exceeded the national standards for Q4 2010 for Safety Indicator (Measure S1.1 S1.2), and Permanency Indicators C2 (C2.1-2.5), and C3 (C3.1-3.3), but did not meet the standards for Safety Indicator 2 (Measure 2B and 2C) and Permanency Composite C1 (C1.1-1.4) and C4 (C4.1-4.3).

Safety outcomes were considered foremost in protecting children in the community. The data review was a consideration in the decision to select this outcome, but the overwhelming rationale from SIP team members was their stated priority of keeping children safe and protected at all times within their county. Safety is a basic essential goal of any community. TC CPS is committed to improving performance related to Safety Outcome Measure S.1.

Most permanency outcomes related to long term care exceed the national standard/goal with the exception of C3.1. Place stability is 1% below the national standard in Q4 2010. These improvement goals parallel the intended outcomes of the State PIP in permanence for all children/youth. Sustained and enhanced permanency efforts are being made across the life of the case to improve outcomes. TC has implemented strategies such as Family Finding and Participatory Case Planning in an effort to improve the permanency outcomes of children in our community. Concurrent planning is considered at the very first placement the child has, whether it be with a relative or with a foster care provider who is interested in adoption. Placements are carefully selected to ensure that the home is a concurrent home prior to placement. Recruitment efforts are still being attempted to identify and license family foster homes within the county. Additionally, foster family agencies certified homes are encouraged to recruit concurrent homes for TC children. Relative and non-related extended family member (NREFM) homes are identified and approved, sometimes within hours of a removal, to keep children/youth within their own community to facilitate reunification and other permanency services. As of the April 1, 2011 point in time report, TC has 13/42 children in identified relative/nrefm homes. (Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Williams, D., Simon, V., Hamilton, D., Lou, C., Peng, C., Moore, M., Jacobs, L., & King, B. (2011). *Child Welfare Services Reports for California*. Retrieved 9/22/2011, from University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare>)

The following themes and strategies were identified and have been implemented by TC for achieving outcome goals:

- Family engagement
 - Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (FSNA)
 - Participatory Case Planning (PCP)
 - Visitation in home/in community
 - Family Group Meetings
- Permanency and Youth Transitions
 - Family Finding
 - After Care Transition Plan
 - Emancipation Conferences
 - Independent Living Services (ILP)
 - Transitional Housing for Youth in Care and After Care (THP Plus/THPP)
- Kinship and Foster care Support
 - Recruitment of foster homes
- Community Connections
 - Targeted advertising
 - Differential Response
 - Mandated Reporter Trainings

The above-mentioned strategies enhance permanency and improve placement stability for our children. Placement stability is enhanced by careful placement selection, Participatory Case Planning, and Family Finding. Enhanced placement stability leads to more timely permanence for children and a more effective delivery of transitional independent living services. Early identification of relatives/NREFM's for both CPS and Probation

children/youth improves placement stability, resulting in more timely reunification or another permanent plan for the child should reunification efforts be unsuccessful.

The connection between TC's SIP and the State PIP:

- TC has fully implemented Participatory Case Planning and other family engagement practices in correlation with the **PIP Strategy 1: *Expand use of participatory case planning strategies.*** Parents and youth are generally more successful with case plans they have helped develop. Services are often tailored to address their own specific needs; are measurable and achievable. Family Group Meetings are utilized when a client is losing focus and needs support to achieve their case plan goals and objectives. FGM's are also initiated when other significant child welfare decision-making events occur.
- TC has partially implemented Family Finding and fully implemented Emancipation Conferences in correlation with **PIP Strategy 2: *Sustain and enhance permanency efforts across the life of the case.*** Family engagement efforts will be utilized in all applicable SIP strategies. Research supports that there are better outcomes when the family is successfully engaged with the social workers, probation officers, and other service providers.
- TC continues to recruit and retain relative/NREFM placements for TC children. Additionally, TC coordinates efforts with Shasta County FFA's to recruit local TC certified/licensed homes for TC children in an effort to allow the children to remain in their community when possible. This strategy correlates with **PIP Strategy 3: *Enhance and expand caregiver recruitment, retention, training and support efforts.*** See the narrative and SIP Matrix for more detail of those strategies.
- TC's PSSF Regional Partnership Grant on Meth Prevention addresses PIP Strategy 4. Since it is an established and on-going service it was not specifically addressed in the three year plan goals. However, TC's CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF three year plan that is integrated into the SIP correlates with **PIP Strategy 4: *Expand options and create flexibility for services and support to meet the needs of children and families.*** Differential Response, in-home parenting education, and supervised visitations are included in the goals. TC has acquired contracts with our local community based-organization, Human Response Network, to provide Differential response and supervised visitation in our community
- TC will continue to build support for the use of Structured Decision Making (SDM), the statewide safety assessment. The correct and consistent use of the SDM tools will be monitored and reinforced, particularly the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (FSNA) tool, which was mentioned previously in this SIP as a goal. The needs of the family will be better identified and addressed so the most effective interventions can be applied. This correlates with **PIP Strategy 6: *Strengthen implementation of the statewide assessment system.***

i. CWS/Probation Matrix

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Safety Indicator 1 S1.1 No recurrence of maltreatment-Of all children who were victims of a substantiated maltreatment allegation during the first 6 months of a year, what percent were not victims of another substantiated maltreatment allegation within the next 6-month period?						
County's Current Performance: Trinity County's performance was 77.8% in Q2-2009; 100% in Q4 2010 the federal standard is >94.6 while the state average is higher at 98.4%.						
Improvement Goal 1.0 The goal is to improve to a rate of 8% of No recurrence of Maltreatment. This represents an increase of 4.2%. Met goal – no recurrence of maltreatment.						
Strategy 1.1 Send referrals to Human Resource Network (HRN) for prevention/intervention services (In-Home Parenting)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CAPIT	Strategy Rationale Intervention is necessary to change the behavior according to research. Nurturing Parent, the curriculum used by HRN, is an evidence based program with researched positive outcomes.	Assigned to		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	CBCAP				
	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSSF				
	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A				
Milestone		Timeframe		Assigned to		
1.1.1	CPS staff will submit referrals to HRN (Differential Response Path 1,2,3) as appropriate Met this goal.	Monthly basis beginning July 1, 2010 On-going.		CPS Supervisor and HRN Prevention Director		
1.1.2	CPS staff will receive monthly reports from HRN on client's progress with open referrals or cases Met this goal.	Monthly basis beginning July 1, 2010 On-going.		HRN Prevention Director forwards to CSP Supervisor		
1.1.3	CPS and HRN staff will meet quarterly to evaluate program success and completion of goals. Have not started yet.	Quarterly (first month of each quarter) Beg. January 2012		CPS Supervisor, CPS Staff Services Analyst and HRN Prevention Director		

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to	CPS Staff Services Analyst and CPS Supervisor
1.3.1 CPS will contract with HRN for a half-time staff person to conduct additional DR services Goal met.	July 1, 2010 contract will be implemented Done/on-going.	CPS Supervisor and HRN Prevention Director	CPS Supervisor and HRN Prevention Director
1.3.2 New half-time position will be supervised by HRN and job expectations collaboratively determined with CPS to meet child welfare needs Goal met.	July 1, 2010 Done/on-going.		

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Permanency/Long Term Care C3.3 In Care three years or longer (emancipated or age 18 in care)-Of all children in foster care during the year who were either discharged to emancipation or turned 18 while still in care, what percent had been in foster care for three years or longer?				
County's Current Performance: The federal standard is <37.5%, the state performance was 60% 0.0% and Trinity County's performance was 50% N.A. for Q2-2009-Q4 2010-. Safe Measures reports reveals the county performance as 33.3% for Q4 2008, the only period of time the county has met the standard over an eleven year period. The raw numbers are few with a total of four children no children represented in the Q2-2009 Q4 2010-data. There were two children or 50% in foster care less than three years and two children or 50% in foster care for three years or more. The data can be easily misrepresented without adequate explanation.				
Improvement Goal 2.0 The goal is to meet the federal standard of <37.5%.				
Strategy 2.1 CWS will implement Family Group Meetings (FGM) replacing Team Decision Making Meetings (TDM) to expedite permanency planning and Participatory Case Planning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	CAPIT	Strategy Rationale TDM's have been utilized in the county since 2003, however, they are limited to placement decisions only and they do not meet the needs of a small, rural county with extremely limited staff and resources. FGM's can follow a similar model and expand to other critical points of the referral/case when child welfare decisions must be made. FGM's are client-centered and strength based bringing family to the decision-making table.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSSF		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A		
Milestone	2.1.1 Determine the FGM model to be used and develop an agency protocol, utilizing Family to Family values and principles. Model will be adaptation of TDM/FGM. Will request shadowing in Shasta County, who has a current practice and policy in place. The goal will be to possibly model our practice after theirs.		To be completed by December 1, 2010 To begin December 30, 2011.	
	2.1.2 Train CPS staff and service providers on FGM model and how to incorporate with Participatory Case Planning		To be completed by January 31, 2011- June 30, 2012, and request UC Davis training on Family Group Decision making process and models- all SW and Supervisor are signed up for training. Use Shasta	
Timeframe			Assigned to	
			CPS Supervisor and Northern Training Academy (UC Davis)	
			CPS Supervisor, CPS Staff Analyst, and Northern Training Academy (UC Davis)	

					County shadowing as preliminary experience for Trinity County.					CPS Supervisor and Northern Training Academy (CWS/CMS Instructor) will provide training. Supervisor will monitor through Safe Measures reports on a weekly basis.
					2.1.3 Train staff on proper documentation of FGM's and family finding efforts (FFE's) in CWS/CMS.				To be completed by March 31, 2014 June 30, 2012.	
Milestone	Strategy 2.2 Implement Family Finding and other "diligent search" activities.			<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Strategy Rationale Children reach permanency sooner when Family Finding efforts are made to locate family and other significant people in the child's life at the onset of removal for purposes of placement and support. The process of finding "lifelong connections" must be a continuous process.					
	2.2.1 Implement a Family Finding protocol as one of the permanency protocols for Trinity County for both CPS and Probation. CPS draft already developed. Probation is currently utilizing CWS program for this element. Protocol to come.				To be completed by July 1, 2014 Completed December 30, 2010.			Assigned to CPS Supervisor, Probation Chief, and CPS Staff Analyst		
	2.2.2 Explore other family finding strategies being utilized by other counties or states and implement protocol appropriate for both CPS and Probation. Goal met.				To be completed by July 1, 2014 Completed December 30, 2010.			CPS Supervisor, Probation Chief, and CPS Staff Analyst		
	2.2.3 Currently, all family finding for CPS and Probation is done by a Social Works Assistant to ensure timeliness and to help with workloads.				Completed.			CPS Supervisor, Probation Chief, HHS Director, and CPS Staff Analyst will review staff resources for possibility of assignment to support staff.		

Strategy 2.3 Initiate Emancipation Conferences for youth turning 16 years old for CPS and 17 years old for Probation youth Implemented/Goal Met.		Strategy Rationale Youth-driven Emancipation Conferences ensure more positive permanency outcomes in education, career planning, family planning, mental and physical health, and the general well-being of the youth. Lifelong connections are identified, relationships are re-established with family members absent from the youth's life for extensive periods of time, and natural supports are identified.	
Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to	
		CAPIT	
		CBCAP	
		PSSF	
		N/A	
2.3.1 Develop an Emancipation Conference model and protocol.	To be completed by February 1, 2011	CPS Supervisor, Chief Probation Officer, and CPS Staff Analyst	
		CPS Supervisor, Probation representative, and CPS Staff Analyst	
		CPS and Probation staff with oversight by Chief Probation Officer and CPS Supervisor will monitor through CWS/CMS documentation. Evaluation will be done through evaluating educational outcomes by review of data, such as graduation rates, and other permanency outcomes.	
2.3.2 Train CPS and Probation staff on Emancipation Conference model and protocol.	To be completed by April 1, 2011		
2.3.3 Fully implement the Emancipation Conference model at both CPS and Probation as part of the ILP process. Documentation will be in CWS/CMS for both CPS and Probation.	To be completed by May 1, 2011 and will be a consistent practice for SIP years 2 and 3.		

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Permanency/Placement Stability

C4.3 Of all children served in foster care during the year that were in foster care for at least 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings?

County's Current Performance:

Trinity County's performance was 36.8% in Q2 2009 40.0% in Q4 2010, the federal standard is >41.8%, and the state performance was 33.4%. The county performance exceeded the state performance, but still was 5% below the federal standard. While still 1.8% below the federal standard, it represents a significant improvement and with only 10 children total in care for at least 24 months, maintaining a 40% rate is a more reasonable target than meeting the standard of >41.8%.

Improvement Goal 3.0

The goal is to meet the federal standard of >41.8%, a 5 percent increase. Children in foster care during the year for at least 24 months will have two or fewer placement settings.

Strategy 3.1

Recruit, train, and support foster parents, including relatives and NREFM's to minimize placement disruptions and maintain children in their own community.

☐ CAPIT

☐ CBCAP

☐ PSSF

☒ N/A

Strategy Rationale

There are many adverse reactions to multiple moves and the trauma of removal. Transitions, when necessary, are often not done well in CWS. Kinship placements are 70% more stable according to one study. Trained and supported foster parents and relatives have more reasonable expectations and more skills. Children experience less trauma upon removal if they remain in their own school, neighborhood, nearby family to increase reunification efforts, etc.

Milestone	Timeframe		Assigned to
3.1.1 Recruit at least one foster family home or (FFA) certified home through targeted advertising and other outreach efforts. Goal met.	July 1, 2011 Increase of 3 (2 with Ready for Life and 1 with Environmental Alternatives)		GAPC liaison, MLMT members, community members, Probation staff, and CPS. Redding FFAs -- Ready for Life & Environmental Alternatives
3.1.2 Identify support activities through phone surveys or questionnaires for foster families and relative/NREFM caretakers throughout the fiscal year, such as appreciation events, BBQ's, etc.	Bi-annual beginning December 1, 2010 and a minimum of twice per calendar year. Develop PSSF monies to support this		CPS

	Consider other locations in county, too, such as Hayfork. Working on training packet to mail out.		recruitment/support campaign and expand supportive program in progress. Packets to go out by March 1, 2011		
	3.1.3 Offer one series of mini-training for foster parents, and relative/NREFM caretakers. One topic area for training has been identified as dealing with children/youth experiencing trauma. Other topic areas will be determined with foster families and relative/NREFM's through phone surveys or questionnaires. The series of training will be developed once topic areas are selected. May model on Alamedas policy, which we will obtain and review.		Topic areas to be completed by January 1, 2012 and training to be completed by June 30, 2012. Training for SIP years 2 and 3 will be completed using the same process.	Community Care Licensing regional office, or CPS and Northern Region Training Academy (UC Davis) will provide and monitor the training. The Academy will evaluate through written evaluations from participants of training.	
	3.1.4 Train Probation staff on relative/NREFM approval process. Social Services Aide is currently training lead Probation Officer and developing a flow chart specific to probation procedures.		December 1, 2010 July 30, 2011	CPS and Probation	
	3.1.5 Develop orientation/resource manual for foster parents and relative/NREFM caretakers. Has not been reassigned and may not be obtainable goal. Currently, staff changes have made this goal a challenge, will reassess and look at other options for completing this project, including finding outside resources.		January 1, 2014 June 30, 2012	CPS	
	Strategy 3.2 Family Group Meetings (FGM) will be conducted to minimize placement disruptions, including the appropriate-age child/youth, current foster parents/relative caretakers, family members and other appropriate agency staff.		Strategy Rationale FGM's/TDM's research indicates placements can be stabilized using solution-focused strategies and a shared decision-making model. Supports and services are put in place to maintain and stabilize the placement. Initial placements using this same approach helps to ensure that the best placement possible is selected in initially.		
			<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		

Milestone		Timeframe		Assigned to	
3.2.1 FGM's will be scheduled at critical transition points.		Beginning September 1, 2010. The existing TDM model can be used until new FGM model is developed and implemented. Still being used until FGM fully implemented in 2012.		CPS Supervisor	
	3.2.2 Staff training will be completed after FGM model is identified and protocol developed.	FGM model to be identified and protocol developed with staff training to be completed by July 31, 2012.		CPS Supervisor and Northern Training Academy (UCD)	

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

The CPS Supervisor and CPS Staff Analyst have developed a Quality Assurance process by utilizing the available data through UC Berkeley, Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) for TDM data, and Safe Measures. Data is reviewed on a weekly basis to monitor improvements and areas where improvement is needed. Safe Measures data extracts are done twice a week. Social worker staff has also been trained on the use of Safe Measures. Probation data will be input into CWS/CMS effective 10/01/10 which will then provide the opportunity for analysis of their data. Probation is now online with entering placement cases in to CWS/CMS. Additionally, CPS staff have been working with a lead Probation Officer to also include monthly contact notes and case plans into the system as well in order to comply with these mandates.

The CPS Supervisor is currently reviewing the full and correct utilization of CWS/CMS by each social worker. A comprehensive review process is currently in place in conjunction with Northern Region Training Academy to ensure that data is recorded properly into CWS/CMS. It is an excellent way to determine training needs and workload issues of each social worker so assistance can be provided.

The current economic climate has had a significant impact on the county, resulting in declining services, rising unemployment rates, increased drug/alcohol abuse, housing instability and domestic violence. Out of home placements have dramatically increased in the last fiscal year, driving up caseloads and workloads within CPS. Probation has faced dramatic cuts to their staffing levels that have impacted client services. Modest improvement goals were targeted considering the fiscal environment forecast for the next two to three years.

***Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.**

CPS and Probation staff is committed to best practices, to the extent possible. CPS staff highly value best practices such as Motivational Interviewing, Signs of Safety, Participatory Case Planning, Family Group Meetings, and other family engagement approaches. They are committed to working with the Northern Training Academy and other service partners to learn best practices, receive coaching to reinforce and practice those skills, and implement them in daily practice. With the current fiscal constraints, the services and training available from the Northern Training Academy are significant. Other training, policy and technical assistance is needed as new laws/appellate cases are enacted, such as Greene vs. Camreta, providing the needed direction to the counties.

CPS staff may need additional training on the basic tenets of concurrent planning to ensure that it is fully understood as a means, as well as a legal requirement, to achieving permanency earlier. The benefits of concurrent planning can be observed early on in a case.

Probation staff will need timely training for them to begin CWS/CMS data entry by October 1, 2010. Probation staff has received this training and are being provided additional support by CPS staff as questions arise. There will be technical assistance issues arising from such a conversion. The NYTD database and CWS/CMS Aftercare cases will also require considerable technical assistance and training from CDSS. Those new requirements for the county are rapidly approaching. This statewide effort fits well with the county's permanency goals. CPS will be sending two staff members to CWS/CMS NYTD training on June 28, 2011. Documentation in CWS/CMS has recently begun for Aftercare cases for ILP youth. We anticipate to have all youth receiving services in the system by August 31, 2011. Additionally, all ILP eligible youth who do not wish to participate in the program will be entered by the end of 2011. Probation will be trained by CPS

staff to input ILP contacts, services and TILPS by 4th quarter of 2011. CPS staff will cross-train Probation staff regarding NYTD requirements by October 2011.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

See Above.

C. CWSOIP Narrative

Probation continues to utilize the CWSOIP funding the last year for the costs associated with the use of the PACT tool. This tool is a risk and needs assessment administered through the website, *Assessment.com*, and it is used by the probation officers in consistently assessing their youth. In addition, probation departments participate in a consortium of county probation offices so that children who have been assessed using this instrument can have consistent case planning when they relocate between consortium counties. The \$10,000 annual funding covers the maintenance and fees associated with this assessment tool. It is Probation's plan to use the CWSOIP funds in the same manner for the upcoming year. Case plans are attached to court reports and made available for judicial reviews.

CPS has utilized the CWSOIP funds in a variety of ways, including direct services to child welfare families. Those services include:

- Expanded/additional Visitations (Human Resource Network)
- Differential Response Services (Human Resource Network)
- Nurturing Parent Materials and Training(Evidence-Based)
- Nurturing Parenting (Evidence-Based) now offered in conjunction with Early Head Start in two communities in Trinity County.
- In-Patient services for mothers and children
- Mental Health Therapy Services
- Provide private counseling for parents who lost Medi-Cal
- Drug Testing
- US Search (Family Finding)
- Ages and Stages Evidenced-Based